



Every part of worship has a video, so we've gathered them [together in a play list](#). [If you click on "Play All"](#), they'll play from the beginning of the service to the end! And you can just follow along, never clicking on another link. Or you can go through clicking on all the individual links – your choice.

Prelude: [The Lord's Prayer by Veritas](#)

Call To Worship, Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Leader: You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,

**All: will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust.'**

Leader: Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling-place,
no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.

**All: For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.**

Leader: You will tread on the lion and the adder,
the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

**All: Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.**

Leader: When they call to me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.

**All: With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.**

Children's Message (for kids of all ages):

What's so wrong with temptation?

Hymn: [A Decided Mind by Greg Bettridge Jr.](#)

If you have a favorite hymn you'd like to include in our worship service, just send it along and I'll look for a good place for it.

Lifting up Our Joys and Concerns:

The response to "Hear our prayer, O God," is "**our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.**"

Almighty God,
we pray for all who live in places of threat and danger.
We trust in you,
for you are able to make peace in the midst of warfare
and turn rough places into level ground.
Teach us to prepare a table where enemies may feast
instead of fight.
Hear our prayer, O God,
our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.

We pray for those lifted up with joy –
Joys that have taken a long time to come,
Joys that have sprung up unexpectedly.
We trust in you
For you offer all of us joy, even in daily lives that can be full of trouble,
We pray

For the generosity that let us bring over 600 toiletry items to the Nashua
Soup Kitchen

For Russell's retirement, and that long list he can finally get to!

For Donna & Peter becoming grandparents (what a lucky kid!)

For meeting Angie Dacey, the new Welfare Officer for the Town of
Brookline. We're praying for her and her clients

Help us to sing with those who are joyful.
Hear our prayer, O God,
our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.

We pray for those weighed down with concerns –
Concerns that everyone can recognize,
And concerns that are burdensome for us alone.
We trust in you
For you are with us always, especially when we feel the most alone
We pray

For Kevin Aitken, recovering from shingles

For Barbara's relative, struggling with depression

For UMC Bishop Eduard Khegay who serves in Russia and Ukraine, as well
as Patrick Streiff & Christian Alstead who serve in Ukraine

For the people of Ukraine and Russia, drawn into a war they did not want

For Luca, Amy's nephew, who had complications when his port was put in.
He's home now, but could use some prayers

For Megan's colleague recovering from knee surgery, may it heal quickly and
well

For Amy, Nancy & Bill's very active daughter, who has to take it easy after
knee surgery

For Polly, John Panto's sister, recovering from a stroke, who's moving into
another facility

For Ann's parents, contemplating a move into a facility that should meet their
medical needs better.

For Clarence Farwell, recovering from a stroke

Help us to ease the burdens of others.
Hear our prayer, O God,
our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.

We pray for all who are chronically homeless,
wandering our streets and sleeping unprotected;
and for those who are homeless for a season
because of natural disaster or economic trouble.

We trust in you,
for you give even to the sparrow a nest where she may lay
her young.

Make us more determined to assist those who need
a place to live.

**Hear our prayer, O God,
our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.**

We pray for those who suffer in body, mind, or heart.
We trust in you,
for you are able to heal
and to make whole in this life and the next.
Make us tender caregivers,
that your healing power may be at work in us and through us.

**Hear our prayer, O God,
our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade.**

We pray for the church, dividing and uniting,
wavering and witnessing.
We trust in you,
for you called the church into being
and have made us your body in and for the world.
Keep your church from being both uncertain and too certain.
Help us to joyfully trust that the Spirit is leading us
into new opportunities of faith and service.
O God, our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade,
we pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ,
who is generous to all who call upon him. Amen.

[For next week, please feel free to send me your joys & concerns and I'll include them in our prayers: minister@bccnh.org or call/text (857) 259-7269.]

Let us pray the Lord's Prayer together:

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn: [Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days by Zack Belsky](#)

Lord! Who throughout these forty days,
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins,
And close by Thee to stay.

As Thou didst hunger bear and thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and chiefly live
By Thy most holy Word.

As Thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the victory win,
Oh, give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.

And through these days of penitence,
And through Thy Passion-tide,
Yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesus with us abide.

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:1-13, p. 835

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone." '

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him."

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you,
to protect you",

and

"On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."

Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Reflection on the Scripture:

This sermon was a bit tricky to write, because, what with Ash Wednesday and having a medical procedure on my knee, I was going to have to write and record it a week ahead of time. And there was a war going on in Europe. And it seemed wrong not to just focus on that. I decided to focus on the Scripture reading, acknowledging that the reality of this week was not going to let me have the more timely reflection I would have wanted. So in this first week in Lent, let's look at the Devil tempting Jesus.

Jesus has been baptized by John the Baptizer, has heard the voice of God from the clouds, calling him "son" and "beloved" and letting everyone know that God is "well pleased" (Luke 3:22). Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, goes off into the wilderness for forty days eating nothing (Luke 4:1). And then the Devil turns up to test Jesus.

Feed the hungry, the Devil says.¹ First himself, but given the number of rocks hanging around the landscape, Jesus can feed thousands. Be the new Moses to your people, feed them, the Devil implies. We can understand hunger. Maybe not forty days' worth of hunger, but we can understand hunger. We can't turn bread into stones, so we don't really understand the temptation, the test, that the Devil is offering here. Jesus can turn stones into bread, Jesus understands the test, and Jesus responds with a line from Moses, *One does not live by bread alone* (Luke 4:4).

Rule the world with justice, the Devil says.² Because the Devil is offering an amazing opportunity. Given the mess that the world is in, surely having a ruler who is deeply committed to love of neighbor, to justice, would be a huge upgrade. But the price is too high. If Jesus plays the world's game and uses power to introduce his vision of how things should be, he is arguing that God does not have all the authority. But no one is going to offer us the opportunity to rule the world. So we don't really understand this temptation either. Jesus does and Jesus responds with another quote from Scripture, *Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him* (Luke 4:8).

Serve God faithfully, the Devil says.³ Go to the Temple in Jerusalem where those who are most faithful to God serve and show how much you believe in the word of God. Throw yourself off the peak of the Temple, where it backs up onto the cliff of Kidron Valley so the fall is 450'.⁴ As one who is the Son of God, who is

¹ Sharon H. Ringe, "First Sunday in Lent, Exegetical Perspective, Luke 4:1-13" in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C, Volume 2*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 247.

² Ringe, 47 & 49.

³ Ringe, 49.

⁴ Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Luke* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 110.

Beloved of God, God won't let you be hurt. Show how faithfully you serve God by demonstrating your faith. We don't believe that God is going to suspend the laws of physics if we fall 450' to the ground. So this last temptation we don't understand either. But Jesus does and Jesus again responds from Scripture, *Do not put the Lord your God to the test* (Luke 4:12).

If these are tests that we can't imagine, how do we know that they are any kind of tests for Jesus? You could offer me the opportunity to drive 150 mph and it wouldn't be tempting at all. I'd hate that. But there are others for whom that would be a dream come true. We know the Devil offers great tests to Jesus because on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus undertakes all of them. Though he refused to turn stones into bread, he does feed the hungry (Luke 9:10-17). Though he refused political power, he teaches about God's empire of justice and peace. Though he refused to jump off the temple to see if God would send angels to catch him, he goes to the cross in confidence that God's will for life will overcome the world's decision to execute him.⁵

So is today's lesson a briefing on what to do should someone offer us superhuman powers? I suppose if it happens, we now know what to say. Someone offering me a chance to drive really quickly wouldn't test me. But mac and cheese when I'm feeling frazzled and overwhelmed ...? I don't think there's a Scripture passage focused on mac and cheese. What I do see in this passage, though, is that Jesus' hold on to himself, to his knowledge of who and what he is, even when something more prestigious, something easier comes along. As someone fully human, Jesus too has that hollow space inside him that belongs to God alone.⁶ And our inclination is to fill that space, with food or porn or drugs or taking care of other people.

That hollowness is not something broken. It is the holy of holies inside of us, the uncluttered throne room of the Lord our God. Nothing on earth can fill it, but we certainly try. We grab our favorite pacifier, oreos or *The Real Housewives* or babysitting for the family across the street so we don't have to sit in our own house, and we try to get them to fill the gap when the most they can do is plug the hole.

And when they don't work, the voice in our head starts up. "You'll starve. You'll go nuts. You won't be you anymore." And if somehow you outwait that voice, another shows up. "Stop messing around with the small scale, go big or go home." And if that doesn't get you, then the last level shows up, "If God really loves you, you can do whatever you want. So stop wasting your time." And we

⁵ Ringe, 49.

⁶ Barbara Brown Taylor, "Settling for Less." *The Christian Century* 115, no. 5 (1998): 169. The whole argument about the holy space and the need to fill it comes from this article.

lose ourselves because we can't stand the emptiness that comes from knowing that God is beyond our grasp and yet a part of our very being.

If we ignore that voice and let the empty space remain empty, we can give ourselves a different kind of test. To know what it feels like to worship God and no one and nothing else. To expect great things, from God and from ourselves. To believe that everything is possible and not settle for anything less.⁷

But, oh, that voice. We can lose ourselves so thoroughly as we listen to it. We can start a fight in a bar or a war in Ukraine as we listen to that voice saying that the emptiness inside us can be filled. Today's reading means that the emptiness doesn't need to be filled. If I know that the voice has designed itself just for me, I'll know that it will make it seem like the sacred space needs filling. But if I worship God and no one else, the voice will lose its power over me, will depart. And I will hold onto myself, like any other child of God, Beloved of God, with whom God is well pleased.

⁷ Taylor, 169.

Hymn: [Lord I Need You by Matt Maher](#)

Lord I come, I confess
Bowing here, I find my rest
Without You, I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart

Refrain

Lord, I need you, oh, I need you
Every hour, I need you
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

Where sin runs deep, your grace is more
Where grace is found is where you are
And where you are, Lord, I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

Refrain

So teach my song to rise to you
When temptation comes my way
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on you
Jesus, you're my hope and stay

Refrain

You're my one defense, my
righteousness
Oh God, how I need you
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given:

**Gracious and Generous God,
we are amazed by the good gifts you bestow
in abundance.**

**Thank you for food that sustains us on our journey.
Thank you for the company of saints to whom we
are joined.**

**Thank you for giving us your work to do on earth.
We offer back to you a portion of all that we
have received,
setting down our baskets in celebration of your
greatest gift,**

Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 19)

Leader: You are with me, Oh God, in my safe places and on my dangerous journeys

All: I look life square in the eye because I know I am not alone.

Leader: Danger may fall square on my head, but you have sent your angels with me, even if I don't always sense their presence.

All: In the end, I can face down the dangers that surround me, with the people you have given me for help, with your faithful presence in my life.

Leader: You will answer those who call to you, who know your name. You'll be with them in times of trouble, and you will remember their names.

All: Let us practice trusting in God in small moments, so we can endure big challenges, confident in what we know.

Leader: Help us to find your presence in our life, in the safe and dangerous moments. Amen.

[CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: # 839 "God Be With You Till We Meet Again; by his counsels guide, uphold you, with his sheep securely fold you; God be with you till we meet again."](#)

Postlude: [I Want Jesus to Walk with Me by the Landstown Community Church Praise & Worship Team](#)

I want Jesus to walk with me

I want Jesus to walk with me

All along my pilgrim journey

I want Jesus to walk with me

In my trials, Lord, walk with me

In my trials, Lord, walk with me

When the shades of life are falling

Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me

In my sorrows, Lord walk with me

In my sorrows, Lord walk with me

When my heart is aching

Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me

In my troubles, Lord walk with me

In my troubles, Lord walk with me

When my life becomes a burden,

Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me

I want Jesus to walk with me

I want Jesus to walk with me

All along my pilgrim journey

I want Jesus to walk with me

I want Jesus to walk with me

I want Jesus to walk with me

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Psalm 91

Known as the Soldier's Psalm, Psalm 91 claims that the awesome power and presence of God is made available to and is committed to the travelers who must go in dangerous places. The psalm interweaves two different kinds of images. The first one is about a safe place, as though one has found a place to hide from the threats. The second is about a safe journey, where the traveler must proceed on roads where one is at the mercy of the forces of darkness. This is a journey taken in the midst of social chaos, where one has no guarantee of safe conduct. Yet God is an escort who makes safe passage possible.

The poem praises safe place (vv. 1-4, 9-10) and safe journey (vv. 5-6, 11-13). Either way, in place or on path, one is safe because God is an attentive protector adequate to every challenge. Without this escort, one is surely doomed to trouble and death. One is still exposed, but no harm can come, because the speaker is not alone.

The initiative of trust and petition belongs with the poet. But God is resolved to answer and is very sure. Because of that, this psalm has reckoned with real life threats, looking them straight in the face.

The language is the language of martial protection. It concerns cleaving and yearning and desiring. It is that which binds God to this psalmist. The songs of confidence are words of trusting people. In this psalm the last word belongs to God, and the last word is caring protection. It is the ground for confidence that the last word is not spoken *by* us, but *to* us (cf. John 6:68).

Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 156-157.



PRAYER LIST (3/6/22)

- Friends & family of June Hoff, Braedon O'Connor, Elly Austin and Patty Birner.
- For everyone to stay as healthy as they can in the days to come
- For the friends & families of those who have died alone
- For our church, that we remain patient with the process of re-opening
- For Judith Atherton, recovering from cardiac surgery
- For Clarence Farwell, recovering from a stroke
- For Kevin Aitken, recovering from shingles
- For Barbara's relative, struggling with depression
- For UMC Bishop Eduard Khegay who serves in Russia and Ukraine, as well as Patrick Streiff & Christian Alstead who serve in Ukraine
- For the people of Ukraine and Russia, drawn into a war they did not want
- For Luca, Amy's nephew, who had complications when his port was put in. He's home now, but could use some prayers
- For Megan's colleague recovering from knee surgery, may it heal quickly and well
- For Amy, Nancy & Bill's very active daughter, who has to take it easy after knee surgery
- For Polly, John Panto's sister, recovering from a stroke, who's moving into another facility
- For Ann's parents, contemplating a move into a facility that should meet their medical needs better.
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning⁸

Loving God, all night I slept in your shadow, sheltered by you. As I enter into the gift of this day, I trust that you are with me. May I see signs and wonders of your presence in the world today, for you alone are God. I ask that this day afford me opportunities to celebrate and share with others the abundance of your grace and love. Help me to be open to all people you bring my way, for you yourself make no distinctions, but are Lord of all. In Christ's name, I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

God, my dwelling place, as the shadows fall, I rest in you. Thank you for the faith that held me fast this day. Thank you, too, for every person who offered me grace, and for those to whom I could also show grace. I pray this night for all who long to see a sign of your power in the darkness that surrounds them. Be near to them and show them your salvation. And in the morning when I rise, give me your work to do for another day; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

In Luke 4:1–13, the devil tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, to take control of the kingdoms of the world, and to perform a spectacular stunt that would “wow the crowd.” Jesus refused to take control in these ways. Instead, Jesus chose another way to feed hungry people, to demonstrate what the kingdom of God looks like, and to enter Jerusalem humbly. Why do think Jesus chose another way to “do justice” and what are some ways that you and your faith community practice justice in his name?

Daily Awareness Reflection⁹

At the end of the day, I've been asking myself the following questions. I jot down the answers and ask them again the next evening. I've found it helps me to remain centered as well as increasing my awareness of God in my life. It takes about 10 minutes.

1. Slow down. Stop. Prepare yourself to pray by becoming aware of the love with which God looks on you ...
2. Note the gifts God has given you today. Give thanks to God for them ...
3. Ask God that this be a time of special grace and revelation ...
4. With God, review the day. Look at the stirrings of your heart, your thoughts, and your choices as the day progressed. Which have been of God? Which have not? What does God want to say to you about both? ...
5. Ask for forgiveness for failures/omissions, for healing from their effects ...
6. Look forward to the following day, and plan concretely with God how to live it according to God's desire for your life ...

⁸ The Morning & Evening Prayer and Question for Reflection are reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion*. Copyright 2014.

⁹ Elizabeth Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31.

Announcements

The church's financial obligations continue. If you are able, please mail your offering to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs. Expenses +/-
January	\$9,155	\$9,686	(\$531)

Please shop smile.amazon.com and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

There are several ways to send your offering.

1. Text "GIVE" to 603-506-4455 for your first time. Click "Sign In" then "Register for an Account"

2. Scan the QR code



3. Mail to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

Senior Luncheon, March 12

Corn beef & cabbage, and we have a very loose definition of "senior" so come to eat or get take away! Contact [Amy Razzaboni](#) for more details.

Basement Insulation going in on March 24

We're ready for the insulation folks to come in March and get the basement buttoned up. Please contact [Susan Haight](#) via email or 603-582-0964 if you have any questions.

Helping Keep the Church Safe and Welcoming, aka Shoveling

The Trustees are looking for folks to help shovel out the church. While the lot is plowed, we need to clear the walkways and the steps as well. We can offer a warmer welcome if getting in is safe and easy. Please contact [Susan Haight](#) via email or 603-582-0964 if you could take a turn.

Save the Date: Discerning When God is Calling the Church, 3/20, after coffee hour

We'd like to begin a time of discussion to discern where God is calling our church to go and grow. We want to explore questions like:

- What have we learned in this time of turmoil and change?
- Who is today's Brookline Community Church?
- What do our choices reveal about what we truly want to be?

Free Covid Home Tests

1. Gov. Sununu [announced a program to deliver free Covid home tests to NH residents](#). You just go to [the program's website](#), put in your zip code and then follow the prompts. They're delivered via Amazon.

2. The federal government will deliver four tests to your home. Just enter your details on a special [US Post Office web page](#).

Reading Together During Epiphany & Lent

We've decided to read Andy Weir's *Project Hail Mary*. We also decided to meet in person in Fellowship Hall (but I can add a zoom meeting if you want to try that).

March 13, 11:30/after coffee hour: Chapters 23-end

Brookline Food Pantry

Although we cannot be together physically at this time, Outreach is continuing to work through the Brookline Welfare office & CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) to address our community's needs.

The Brookline food pantry is now open on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10-2:00 for drop-offs only. There is a list on the [Brookline Food Pantry's Facebook page that is being updated as items are needed](#). In addition to Market Basket gift cards, this week, they're looking for:

Ensure or similar (other than Chocolate)	Paper Towels
Carrots	Kitchen Sponges
Condiments (other than ketchup and mustard)	Dishwasher Detergent
Mayo	Contact Solution
BBQ Sauce	Shaving Cream
Flour	XL Overnight Men's Undergarments
Shortening	Luv's Size 4 Diapers
	Pampers Water Wipes (baby wipes)

If you know of anyone who could use some help from the Food Pantry, please let Rebecca or Amy know. We sense there's more need in the community than is currently picking up food.

Non-perishables can be dropped off at Brookline Town Hall (downstairs near the Town Clerk's Office), at the Brookline Post Office, or at the Cozy Tae Cart any time those places are open.

As always, perishable items such as bread, cheese, butter, eggs, meats, and milk can be donated during open pantry hours: Tues and Thurs, 10am - 2pm.

Habitat for Humanity Build in Nashua

Although they are not accepting volunteer builders at the moment, we have provided a financial donation to Habitat for Humanity in Nashua. They are currently working on a duplex for two female veterans and their kids. Habitat would welcome financial contributions at this time as well.